

## Delta Vision

### Survey of State Organizational Approaches to Managing Fish, Water, and Watersheds Summary Version

#### **(1) Examples where Fish Management and Water Management are Apparently Well Integrated**

##### A. Colorado

- Division of Water Resources' mission includes promoting resource stewardship
- Division of Wildlife has an Engineering Section that designs projects that are beneficial to wildlife
- Division of Wildlife's Water Section's goal is to "optimize water use for wildlife"
- State Wildlife Areas have associated water rights that are used to enhance wildlife
- Colorado Water Conservation Board is responsible for water projects as well as stream and lake protection, and river restoration

##### B. Indiana

- Dept. of Natural Resources has an Engineering Division that serves both the Fish and Wildlife and the Water Divisions
- Division of Water has responsibility for resource conservation, and Environmental Unit determines whether water projects will have an unreasonable impact on plants & animals

##### C. Maryland

- Water Management Administration is charged with protecting the aquatic environment by managing surface and groundwater resources, maintaining safe and reliable drinking water supplies, and preserve water and wetlands
- the WMA's Water Quality Infrastructure program develops capital projects that address public health at the same time as restoring habitat
- the WMA's Water Supply Program implements programs for public drinking water systems that hinge on source protection

##### D. Rhode Island

- Dept. of Environmental Management, Bureau of Environmental Protection, Office of Water Resources' mission includes providing for healthy communities of aquatic life, and the protection and rehabilitation of wetlands for habitat
- State Water Resources Board administers water supply planning and allocation
- State Water Resources Board Corporate (a separate agency) establishes water supply facilities, leases these to municipal or private entities, contracts for their use, or sells the water involved with the facilities

##### E. Wyoming

- Integration is achieved through the 1986 Instream Flow Law that designated the maintenance of stream flows a beneficial use
  - following a biological assessment of necessary flows by the Game and Fish Department, the Water Development Commission (a separate water supply agency) analyzes the amount of water available in a stream segment, and applies for instream flow water rights (the WDC is the only entity that can obtain these)

## **(2) Examples where Watershed Management Efforts include Activities other than Water Quality Coordination, Grantmaking, and Technical Support**

### **A. Colorado**

- State Water Conservation Board's Watershed Protection & Flood Mitigation Program focuses on
  - preventing flood damages, reviewing and approve floodplain designations, and preparing for and responding to flood events
  - partnering with other government entities to stabilize and restore stream channels and provide habitat
  - administering a Watershed Protection Fund

### **B. Kentucky**

- Division of Water's Watershed Management Branch supports not just water quality but quantity planning and analysis for the state's 12 basins (organized into 7 units)
- this Branch serves as the state's water supply entity
- the Water Quantity Management Section of the Branch implements water supply planning, drought monitoring, water shortage response, and water withdrawal permitting

### **C. Maryland**

- Department of Natural Resources' Forest Service's Forest Watershed Management Program focuses on
  - riparian forest buffers
  - drinking water source protection
  - watershed-based management and restoration, and
  - timber harvesting best management practices

### **D. Massachusetts**

- Dept. of Conservation & Recreation, Division of Water Supply Protection, Office of Watershed Management manages and protects the 3 major supply watersheds for 2.2 million residents – one of the nation's largest unfiltered water supply systems covering over 100,000 acres of land
  - the Division is responsible for management of watershed land, among other things
  - public access and land use are carefully regulated
  - the Department compensates 31 communities which contain land and water bodies via a regular and stable Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program
- State Water Supply Protection Trust provides the mechanism for the Mass. Water Resources Authority, which distributes water, to fund the Office's annual \$30 million budget, which includes land acquisition and the PILOT program

### **E. Minnesota**

- 1955 Watershed Act permitted the creation of watershed districts that would conserve natural resources through land use planning, flood control, groundwater, erosion, habitat and other conservation projects
- Broad authorities include
  - the power to regulate, conserve, and control the use of water resources within the district
  - contract with units of government and private and public corporations to carry out water resource management projects
  - hire staff and contract consultants
  - assess properties and levy taxes to finance district administration
  - accept public and private grants and encumber debt
  - acquire property needed for projects

- acquire, construct, and operate drainage systems, dams, dikes, reservoirs, and water supply systems
- enter upon lands within and without the district to make surveys and conduct investigations

#### F. Nebraska

- In 1969 the Nebraska legislature divided the state Natural Resources Districts as the “multi-purpose, local unit of Nebraska Government for management, development, and protection of the soil and water resources found in that basin”
- The 23 districts are delineated along watershed lines with respect to Nebraska's 13 major river basins
- Districts exercise authority over
  - water and soil resources
  - solid waste disposal, sanitary systems, drainage, and pollution control
  - management of fish and wildlife habitat and recreation and park facilities, and
  - forest and range management
- Board members, elected by district voters, manage annual budgets ranging from \$125,000 to \$16,400,000 and exercise a range of fiscal authorities including taxation and bonding
- The Dept. of Natural Resources’ Small Watersheds Flood Control Fund was established in 1963 to assist local sponsors with the acquisition of land rights for flood control projects

#### G. New York

- The Bureau of Water Resource Management manages the Dept. of Environmental Conservation’s water quality and watershed protection programs
- A 1997 MOU stipulated that New York City solicit purchase of 355,000 acres of land in the watershed between 1997 and 2007 to protect its drinking water sources
- Between 1997 and 2003, City obtained or had under contract over 52,000 acres at a cost of \$131 million, with over 70% of the acreage obtained in high priority areas, including 1,200 acres of wetlands
- 1989 legislation added water conservation to requirements for a public water supply permit

#### H. Oregon

- The Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watershed is a comprehensive plan for the conservation of salmon and the protection of their habitat which coordinates the actions of all state agencies that affect aquatic resources
- It involves a core agency team (for coordination and oversight that focuses on issues which transcend the authority of any single agency), as well as implementation, outreach, monitoring, regional, and independent multidisciplinary science teams

#### I. Vermont

- The Department of Environmental Conservation’s Water Quality Division’s River Management Program promotes the planning, designing, and protecting of river corridors that will accommodate stream meander and floodplain processes as the most economically and environmentally sustainable river management alternative
- This includes (1) corridor planning (resolving conflicts between human investments and ecology), (2) protection (funding to purchase river channel management rights), and (3) restoration (natural channel design)